

ALASKA COUNCIL ON EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
MINUTES - Thursday, October 7, 2010

Call to Order:

David Hull, Chair called the Fall meeting of the Alaska Council on Emergency Medical Services to order at 9:25 a.m.

Welcome and Introductions:

ACEMS Members in Attendance:

Ron Bowers	Soren Threadgill
John Dickens	Roy Sursa
David Hull, Chair	Mary Leemhuis
Danita Koehler, MD	Karen O'Neill, MD

State Section of Emergency Programs Staff in Attendance:

Julie Rabeau, Trauma Unit Manager	Shelley K. Owens, EMS Unit Manager
Nancy Barros, EMS Unit	

EMS Regional Staff in Attendance:

Sue Hecks, Executive Director, Southern Region EMS Council, Inc.
Bobbi Leichty, Executive Director, Southeast Region EMS Council, Inc.
Dan Johnson, Executive Director, Interior Region EMS Council, Inc.
Aggie Jack, EMS Director, Maniilaq EMS
Dave Potashnick, EMS Regional Director, North Slope Borough Fire Department
Mike Motti, EMS Coordinator, Southeast Regional Health Corporation EMS
Skip Richards, EMS Coordinator, Chugachmiut Corporation
Jane Schultz, Kenai Peninsula EMS Coordinator
Jud Brenteson, Kodiak EMS Coordinator
Dave Milligan, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation Coordinator
Michael Oliver, Maniilaq EMS

Liaison Representative Members in Attendance:

Gordon Descutner, Alaska Fire Standards Council Buddy Lane, Alaska Fire Standards-North Pole Fire; Aubrey Raby, Alaska Fire Service Council
BJ Coopes, MD, Pediatric Intensivist and Pediatrician

Others in Attendance:

John Coghill, Alaska State Senate
Mark Johnson, EMS for Children

The Minutes from the February 4-5, 2010 meeting and the Agenda for October 7-8, 2010 were approved.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES, LIAISON MEMBERS AND STAFF

Executive Committee Report (Dave Hull)

ACEMS is happy to have the Alaska Fire Council working closely with them as Fire and EMS have similar issues.

EMS - Children Report (Mark Johnson)

Mark described the 20-year history of the EMS-C program. Ten percent of ambulance runs involve pediatric patients, and discussion was held about the lack of training offered for EMS personnel, and equipment needed for EMS personnel to handle pediatric calls. A resolution was passed recommending mandatory pediatric training hours. Some of the competing requirements of EMT re-certification were discussed and the concern raised that offering pediatric training would open the door for other specialties to want their own training. The agreed upon overall goal is to raise the standard of care for children.

Alaska and EMS Report (Lt. Gov. Craig Campbell)

Lt. Gov. Campbell stated that the ALMR system is doing well. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs runs the ALMR program. DMVA reports that this year's budget for ALMR will be tight and may need to be reduced in the future. ALMR is an expensive system that doesn't solve all of Alaska's communications issues. John Madden, Director of the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, reported that the Alaska National Guard has restructured and is now 500,000 members strong. It has a new role as a reconnaissance unit as well as acting as emergency police and safety in times of emergency. Discussion was then held on cross-training possibilities for EMS and ANG members.

Department of Health & Social Services and EMS Report (Commissioner William Hogan)

Commissioner Hogan began by thanking the EMT community for their work. There will be a "hold the line" budget which would only allow a minor incremental increase or small new initiatives. A big issue is Medicaid. \$180 million in general funds were added for FY10 to address the rise in Medicaid enrollment numbers. The Medicaid Task Force will be looking at three issues: eligibility, services, and rates for providers. The EMS budget is fine.

There was a discussion about the ACEMS committee that reviewed the EMT certification process and the prehospital data collection project. Bobbi Leichty expressed the concern that without a Data Manager position in the EMS Office, the Regions have had to cover that function. The Code Blue project is in the Governor's budget.

Alaska COMMS Data Project Presentation (Julie Stinson & Dave Bush)

Julie and Dave gave a PowerPoint presentation on the AK COMMS database project.

Alaska Interoperability Communication Committee Report (John Dickens)

John reported that ALMR was a road system only communications system and did not solve all of the communications problems in Alaska. The subscription cost is high which has led Anchorage to opt out of the program. The radios are estimated to cost \$5,000-\$6,000 each. DMVA is in the process of giving out satellite phones to communities and the Division of Forestry has radio caches that can be accessed. Major Matt Levesque with the Alaska State Troopers discussed setting up a 911 governance that would integrate and centralize 911 services for rural areas. A motion was introduced and seconded for ACEMS to write a letter in support of this initiative.

EMS Training Committee Report (Dave Rockney)

The Certification Subcommittee has drafted a letter with their concerns in the certification process and access to certification information in the certification database. Shelley described the process for making Section web page changes and the certification website, which requires work by IT staff. Meetings were held with IT staff to discuss the requested enhancements. Staff are exploring options for an online application process, which will require funding. The office currently does not have a Data Manager position. The cold water guidelines and trauma treatment and transport guidelines need to be updated. Shelley would like a review of the EMS regulations to be completed within the next year. The Committee considered changing the term of certification to 72 hours/3 years for CME.

EMS Manager Report (Shelley Owens)

A number of changes have taken place in EMS, including the reorganization of the Section, and turnover of the Section Chief, EMS Manager, Trauma Coordinator, Certification Assistant, and Administrative staff. In

addition 4 offices are being consolidated into one space. Previous ACEMS legislative proposals were forwarded up the chain again, including the ILCOR amendment and an amendment to statute to clarify that EMS providers are mandatory reporters of child abuse. A third proposal for, recomposition of ACEMS, needs to be finalized. A motion was passed to request an opinion of the Attorney General whether EMS personnel are considered practitioners of healing arts or under other provisions to include them within the category of mandatory reporters.

Code Blue Report (Bobbi Leichty)

It had been 10 years since Code Blue was launched, thanks to Matt Anderson. Bobbi reported that the brochure will be updated annually. Bobbi was contacted twice for capital requests. The USDA was not able to fully fund the program and wanted early requests for next year.

State EMS Symposium Report (Lee Parham)

Lee describes plans for the upcoming Symposium, which will be held again at the Egan Convention Center. The schedule will be included in the Response newsletter. Sue Hecks described the courses that will be presented.

Public Information and Education Task Force Report (Skip Richards)

Skip thanked all who participated in preparation of the EMT posters for the EMS Symposium. PIE discussed a recognition program for EMS providers, including a certificate of recognition, poster, and/or Public Service Announcement.

Trauma System Review Committee Report (Julie Rabeau)

Julie reported that ANMC and YKHC went through the redesignation process. Discussion was held whether giving money to hospitals will work as incentive to do the ground work of trauma designation. Julie said that legislation and funding might help in positive movement. Julie reported that there was a Trauma Care Fund for uncompensated care thanks to Senator Coghill. Trauma was also developing an administrative change in state statute. The Alaska Trauma Register hired a new administrator who has cleaned up the registry. Validation of data is critical. Discussion was held on who makes the decision on where trauma patients go and what the diversion protocols are.

Recessed: 4:55 pm

ALASKA COUNCIL ON EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
MINUTES - Friday, October 8, 2010

Call to Order: 8:15 am

Chair Dave Hull reported that Steve O'Connor passed away October 7, 2010 at approx. 6:00 p.m.

Emergency Programs Section Chief Report (Sally Abbott)

Sally reported that the Section was \$2.5 million over budget last year and is less than \$50,000 over budget this year. Under the restructuring of the Section, EMS will be brought more into preparedness. Discussion was held on funding for ACEMS. ACEMS is in the Division spending plan. Discussion was then held on EMS involvement in mass casualty planning and preparedness. Sally discussed the State receiving a Federal Medical Station that can be set up to house 250 patients. The FMS would include supplies only, no staff.

Cross Borders Conference Report (Sally Abbott)

Sally reported that surveillance activities are being coordinated through Region X and Canada and that there is \$29,000 available for travel funds. The Pacific Northwest Alliance was recently signed. A discussion on patient transport out of state was then held. Senator Coghill suggested that during the legislative session to push an MOU between governments.

REGIONAL EMS DIRECTORS & COORDINATORS REPORTS

Interior EMS Region Report (Dan Johnson)

There were no major staffing changes and the Region has a highly functioning board. Code Blue has been their major activity with \$400,000 benefitting 33 communities. Training is the core of their activities, and was conducted for 4,300 people. The Region is assisting the University of Alaska in their paramedic training program. The Region rents out training equipment, sells textbooks, and conducts training for the North Star Borough. They have brought 26 certified ambulance services online into the AURORA data project. They have already collected 1,700 run reports, which is about 40-50 percent of runs made. Two main issues: time and communication. Tok is unincorporated and has no tax base. Their income is from run fees and they may need to discontinue services. Healy is in transition in its primary care clinic. The Interior Neighborhood Health Center is helping the Healy clinic.

Southern Region Report (Sue Hecks)

This year is the 35th anniversary of the Region. It has an active Board which expanded by one seat to include a Level 1 responder. They are searching for a Training Coordinator and working to improve classrooms for training. Right now they are renting space. They are creating the Above and Beyond Award for recruitment and retention. They are hoping this award develops recognition by having staff nominated by their communities. Code Blue: they are partnering with Southeast Region on safety design for ambulances. They are evaluating adding in an AURORA reporting requirement for a service to qualify for Code Blue money. They conducted a survey in looking for ways to improve their service. Some of the challenges they are facing include project incomes, competing with private entities, difficulty in finding contract instructors for higher level courses, lack of money for training, and covering 9 sub-areas.

Southeast Region Report (Bobbi Leichty)

Southeast Region has 42 ambulance services with 650 field providers. They have really good staff who are all volunteers. They provide clinical coordination on medevacs in partnership with the University of Alaska Southeast. The Nursing Board has given its permission for nurses to work on ambulances. SEREMS is working on an online ETT course for use in the schools. Mike Motti SEARHC reported on their projects, including the purchase of a human patient simulator for \$150,000. Problems: Prince of Wales Island has cut its EMS services. Thorne Bay has suspended its service, and Craig is without service. Klawock has a paid service through LifeMed.

The EMS Symposium was held on April 15 and 16 in Sitka. Next year's Symposium will have a forum to revise the Cold Injury Guidelines. Bobbi described the response from her staff and the Region to Hoonah following the murder of two police officers and lockdown of the community. Discussion was held on dispatch and medevac services in Southeast.

Northwest Artic - Maniilaq Association Report (Aggie Jack)

The Region taught ETT classes at the high school. Some of their ETTs have gone on to medical school. They held a Trauma Day where 500 people attended to learn about boat, bike, and helmet safety and fire prevention. Their issues include difficulty in scheduling the hospital conference room and offsite storage. They are working on Phase IX and Phase X of Code Blue. A discussion on 4-wheeler safety was held because a lot of trauma cases stem from ATV accidents.

North Slope Borough Report (Dave Potashnick)

They met to work on the latest grant Logic Model. They are trying to implement measures that would relieve volunteers from working with the health department to provide non-emergency transports. Their training has been promoting fire safety in the classroom. Mask fit testing was pushed out to all of their villages. Discussion was held about coverage and air response to communities in the Borough.

Norton Sound Report (Louis Murphy)

EMS funded clinic staff to participate in a plane crash response exercise. Training was conducted in villages consisting of ETT training in schools and first aid/CPR classes. Training standards are being raised for flight program staff. The Region has spent \$1.2 million on patient transport equipment. They are working to get their oxygen generators up to fire standards. A new hospital is supposed to open in February 2012. Discussion was held on the H1N1 response to Little Diomed and Hooper Bay and problems with musk oxen and polar bears.

Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation (Brian Lefferts)

One issue they are working on is the lack of enforcement of the helmet and PFD ordinances. They are looking into using social networking to get their messages to target audiences. Since the last meeting 58 gun safes have been installed in new homes.

Regional Directors & Coordinators Report (Sue Hecks)

The RD&C discussed the AURORA data collection project. The State office is evaluating additional modules to enhance data collection. There is a letter going out promoting the good things about AURORA. The RD&C adopted a proposal to draft a letter to ACEMS and the State office supporting ambulance reporting into AURORA. A Data Manager is needed in the State office. Sally reported that Preparedness has funds for a web-based certification module. A discussion was held on the long term use of Code Blue and its needs. Revision of the EMS regulations was discussed. The Regions provided a lot of input on regulation changes at an August 9th meeting, and the Training Committee is evaluating regulations related to training. It was proposed that future updates be done incrementally by section instead of as one large project. February 2, 2011 is EMS Day at the Legislature. Mike Motti raised the proposal of creating an EMS Board. A Committee was appointed with Dan Johnson as Chair to review the proposal. Committee members appointed are Bobbi Leichty, Aggie Jack, Sue Hecks, Mike Motti, Soren Threadgill, Mary Leemhuis, and Shelley Owens.

Fire Standards Council Report (Gordon Descutner)

The Fire Standards Council falls under the Commissioner of Public Safety and was formed in 1999 to manage testing and accreditation. They have their own budget and are their own advocates. They will be meeting in Juneau in February 2011 are want to meet with ACEMS. They have a strong interest in forming a partnership with ACEMS. Discussion was held on developing a standard, non-regulatory certification for land/marine safety. The discussion went further into the topics of current CPR/first aid standards. The Council recognizes and accepts ICS 100 and 200 training standards. There was discussion about the issues that Fire and EMS share, such as training standards.

Injury Prevention Report (Jayne Andreen)

Jayne gave a presentation on the Injury Prevention program. Kathy Allely is the Section Chief. They are working on unintentional and intentional injury prevention and health promotion. There is new funding from the CDC with the intention to fund every state. Discussion was held on suicide prevention in rural Alaska.

Department of Transportation Liaison Report (Cindy Cashen)

A discussion was held on the differences between major and minor accidents and driver's education in the schools. Cindy invited ACEMS to attend the next State Highway Safety planning meeting and advised ACEMS about grant funding up to \$10,000 that is open to apply for anytime throughout the year.

By Laws & Membership Committee Report (Soren Threadgill)

Soren reported that there are 3 renewing positions. There was discussion about changing one of the Consumer position to a pediatric representative, and to change a second Consumer position to a trauma surgeon. Also discussed was the vote taken at the October 2008 ACEMS meeting to include a member of the Fire Chiefs' Association as a voting ACEMS member. The Fire Standards Council didn't endorse giving ACEMS a voting membership on the Council and a comment was made that the vote was based on the expectation that there would be reciprocal representation by ACEMS on the Fire Standards Council, and that ACEMS members wear multiple hats, both as Fire Chiefs and providers, and that voting representation by the fire service might not be necessary.

Motion: [Dr. Danita Kohler/Soren Threadgill] To rescind the October 2008 vote to allow the Fire Chiefs' Association a voting position on ACEMS.

Action: Motion passed with one member opposing.

Motion: [Ron Bowers/Dr. Danita Kohler] To include the AK Fire Chief's Association as a Liaison Member on ACEMS.

Action: Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: [Dr. Danita Kohler/Roy Sursa] To convert 2 of the Consumer positions to a Pediatrician and a General Surgeon involved in trauma and injured patient care.

Action: Motion passed unanimously.

Division of Public Health (Dr. Ward Hurlburt)

Dr. Hurlburt highlighted our close working relationship with native health partners. He and Jay Butler from ANTHC have been visiting rural communities, especially their clinics, Public Health Centers, and with their EMS staff. He is looking forward to the changes in EMS and Trauma with Shelley Owens and Julie Rabeau, and is grateful to Martha Moore pulling together the Trauma Registry data. He thanked Senator Coghill for his work on the Trauma bill, but noted that 2 hospitals in Anchorage are not anxious to make a change. Some ETTs want to obtain certification consistent with the national levels to enhance their career prospects. Discussion followed about trauma center designation and the pros and cons of requiring trauma patients to be transported to a designated trauma center. Further discussion included the difficulties with adopting the national curriculum and certification model in Alaska. Dave Milligan expressed concern that adoption of the national curriculum in Alaska would result in the loss of EMT-IIIs in Dillingham. Cross border issues and the role of the Coast Guard were discussed.

Motion: [Soren Threadgill/John Dickens] To write a letter to USCG District 17 supporting the continued training of EMTs to the EMT-II level.

Action: Motion passed unanimously.

Bobbi offered to help with the wording of the letter.

Danita offered to help write a letter congratulating the Air National Guard. (No motion taken)

Adjourned: 4:25 pm

ACTION ITEMS:

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